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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



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STATE OF MONTANA

HELENA, MONTANA 59620

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February 14, 1985

Re: Preliminary Environmental Review
Absarokee Class III Landfill

Board of County Commissioners, Stillwater County Courthouse, Columbus
Rod Fink, County Sanitarian, County Courthouse, Box 111, Columbus
Mitch Press, Stillwater County Planning Board, Box 851, Columbus
Editor, Absaroka Sun, Absarokee, MT
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Rm. 432, Helena
Tom Ellerhoff, Environmental Sciences Div., DHES, Cogswell Bldg., Helena
Harold Chambers, State Library, Capitol Complex, Helena

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Pursuant to the Administrative Rules of Montana, 16.2.604,
the following Preliminary Environmental Review has been prepared by the
Department of Health and Environmental Sciences concerning Absarokee
Class III Landfill and Container Site.

The purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Review is to inform
all interested governmental agencies, public groups or individuals of
the proposed action and to determine whether or not the action may have
a significant effect on the human environment. This Preliminary
Environmental Review will be circulated for a period of fifteen (15)
days at which time a decision will be made as to our future action.

If you care to comment on this proposed action, please do so within
the allotted time.

Sincerely,

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

FEB. 24 1985

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JCG:vc
Encls.

JOHN C. GEACH
Solid Waste Management Bureau
Environmental Sciences Division

WILSON 3223

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES
Cogswell Building, Helena, Montana 59601
(406) 444-2821

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Division/Bureau Environmental Sciences/Solid & Hazardous Waste Bureau

Project or Application Absarokee Class III Landfill and Container Site

Description of Project The Stillwater County Refuse Disposal District has submitted a solid waste management system license application to this department. This application is for a Class III (demolition material) landfill and container site, located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 20, Township 3S, Range 19E,. This location is the old Absarokee demolition material dump site. The refuse district has fenced this site, established operational hours and provides a caretaker during open periods. The caretaker directs and oversees the dumping of materials in either the Class III disposal trench or the Class II containers.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats				X		X
2. Water quality, quantity and distribution				X		X
3. Geology & soil quality, stability and moisture			X			X
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality				X		X
5. Aesthetics			X			X
6. Air quality			X			X
7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
9. Historical and archaeological sites				X		

POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Social structures and mores				X		
2. Cultural uniqueness and diversity				X		
3. Local and state tax base & tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural or industrial production				X		
5. Human health				X		
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income		X				X
7. Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities				X		
8. Quantity and distribution of employment				X		
9. Distribution and density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services		X				X
11. Industrial & commercial activity				X		
12. Demands for energy			X			X
13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals				X		X
14. Transportation networks & traffic flows			X			X

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction Stillwater County Dept. of Health

Individuals or groups contributing to this PER. _____

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS Not Necessary

PER Prepared by: _____

JOHN GEACH

Date: 2/15/85

DHES/ESD-2

ABSAROKEE CLASS III LANDFILL AND
CONTAINER SITE
PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

2/14/85

1. Terrestrial and aquatic life and habitat

This site is the location of the previous Absarokee dump site for wood, brush and other Group III materials. This site was unsupervised and access was uncontrolled. Refuse fires were common and much of the ground surface has been disturbed by either fires or the blading of soil for periodic covering of the site's refuse. As a result the site is devoid of vegetation and suitable habitat for terrestrial life forms.

2. Water quality, quantity and distribution

The site is underlain by layered sandstones which would exhibit low permeability rates. In addition the applicant indicates groundwater depths in this area to be greater than 100 feet. Group III materials such as wood wastes, metal appliances and used tires are basically inert and should not pose a leachate threat. These factors indicate this site will not have an impact on any groundwater supply in the area.

3. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture

Normal landfill operations modify the soil's moisture and stability within the fill areas. Some minor settling may occur over completed trench areas. However, with proper grading and re-dressing of these areas, no serious or long term problems should result.

4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality

This project site contains no vegetative cover due to past operational practices. The improved operation of this site will allow native vegetation to re-establish. Hybrid ground cover and plant species could also be seeded on completed portions of the landfill site.

5. Aesthetics

The stock-piling of appliances, wood wastes, metals and tires prior to disposal could create an eyesore. This impact could be mitigated by routine disposal of these materials.

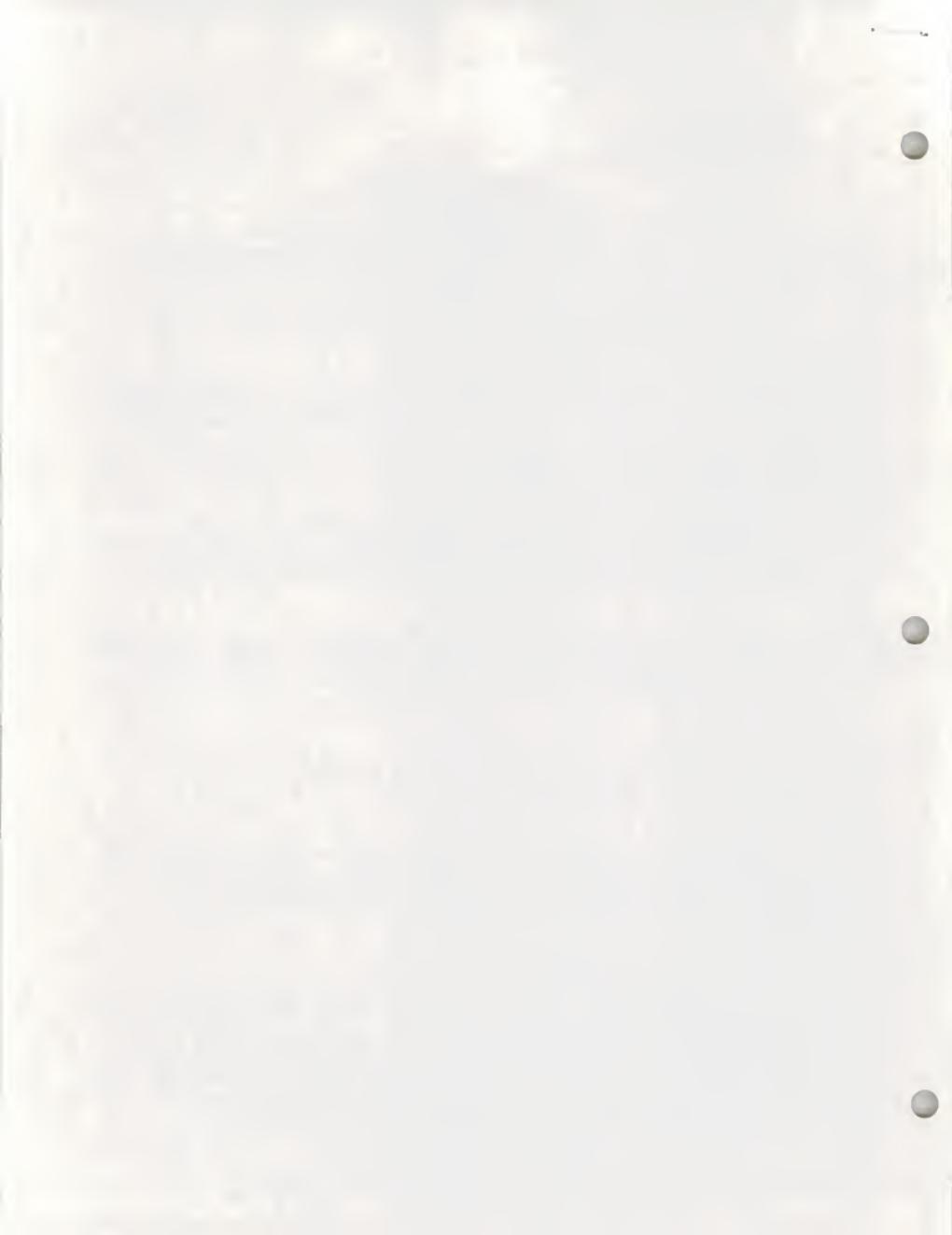
6. Air quality

Licensed Class III landfills can apply to the state Air Quality Bureau for periodic burning permits for clean wood wastes. The burning of this type of material is not considered a major pollutant source and should not adversely impact the area's air quality.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

5. Human health

The dump site that previously operated at this location provided food and harborage to animals, insects and rodents. Many of these vectors had the potential of transmitting many animal and human diseases. In addition the past burning of household refuse including plastics and synthetic materials that allowed toxic fumes to be released into the air. The establishment of this properly operated disposal facility will eliminate the human health hazards associated with the previous operation.



8. Quantity and distribution of employment

This landfill will require at least one part-time employee to perform site caretaking and disposal functions.

10. Demands for government services

Governmental services will be required on the local and state levels for inspectional and administrative services associated with the issuance of a solid waste management system license to this disposal facility.

12. Demands for energy

Gasoline and other petroleum products will be consumed in refuse transportation to and from this disposal facility and in the operation of the equipment needed at the site to properly handle and dispose of the refuse.

13. Locally adopted environmental plans and goals

The location of this facility complies with all existing local planning and zoning ordinances as certified by the county sanitarian.

14. Transportation networks and traffic flows

Since this location will now serve the entire community's refuse disposal needs, increases in traffic flows along the roads leading to the site can be expected. Associated with these increases will be increased dust generation and accelerated road deterioration. Additional road maintenance will be required to maintain these roads. The applicant certifies the bridges and roads leading to the site can support loaded vehicles travelling to and from the disposal facility.



